

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

104th Congress
1st Session

Vote No. 249

June 12, 1995, 6:30 p.m.
Page S-8169 Temp. Record

TELECOMMUNICATIONS/Scrambling of Sexually Explicit Programming

SUBJECT: Telecommunications Competition and Deregulation Act of 1995 . . . S. 652. Feinstein/Lott amendment No. 1269.

ACTION: AMENDMENT AGREED TO, 91-0

SYNOPSIS: As reported, S. 652, the Telecommunications Competition and Deregulation Act of 1995, will amend telecommunications laws and reduce regulations in order to promote competition in the telecommunications industry by eliminating barriers that prevent telephone companies, cable companies, and broadcasters from entering one another's markets. It will also permit electric utilities to enter the cable and telephone markets. Judicial control of telecommunications policy, including the "Modified Final Judgment" regime, will be terminated.

The Feinstein/Lott amendment would add that "In providing sexually explicit adult programming or other programming that is indecent and harmful to children on any channel of its service primarily dedicated to sexually-oriented programming, a multichannel video programming distributor shall fully scramble or otherwise fully block the video and audio portion of such channel so that one not a subscriber to such channel or programming does not receive it." Additionally, distributors would not be permitted to show such sexually explicit programming during hours that children normally watch television until such time as they fully scrambled that programming.

Those favoring the amendment contended:

This amendment would require cable companies to scramble fully both the audio and visual signals on sexually explicit programming channels that they carry like Playboy and Spice. The cable industry adopted voluntary standards when it was pressured to do so by elected officials, but those standards are ridiculously weak, and are often ignored by companies because they are only voluntary standards. Very frequently these channels are only partially blocked or the signals are only intermittently blocked. Audio signals broadcasting obscene language are sometimes not blocked at all. Children have access to these inadequately blocked channels.

(See other side)

YEAS (91)				NAYS (0)		NOT VOTING (8)	
Republican (49 or 100%)		Democrats (42 or 100%)		Republicans (0 or 0%)	Democrats (0 or 0%)	Republicans (4)	Democrats (4)
Abraham	Hatch	Akaka	Inouye			McCain ⁻²	Bradley ⁻²
Ashcroft	Hatfield	Baucus	Johnston			Santorum ⁻²	Harkin ⁻²
Bennett	Helms	Biden	Kerrey			Specter ⁻²	Kennedy ⁻²
Bond	Hutchison	Bingaman	Kerry			Warner ⁻²	Nunn ⁻²
Brown	Inhofe	Boxer	Kohl				
Burns	Jeffords	Breaux	Lautenberg				
Campbell	Kassebaum	Bryan	Leahy				
Chafee	Kempthorne	Bumpers	Levin				
Coats	Kyl	Byrd	Lieberman				
Cochran	Lott	Conrad	Mikulski				
Cohen	Lugar	Daschle	Moseley-Braun				
Coverdell	McConnell	Dodd	Moynihan				
Craig	Murkowski	Dorgan	Murray				
D'Amato	Nickles	Exon	Pell				
DeWine	Packwood	Feingold	Pryor				
Dole	Pressler	Feinstein	Reid				
Domenici	Roth	Ford	Robb				
Faircloth	Shelby	Glenn	Rockefeller				
Frist	Simpson	Graham	Sarbanes				
Gorton	Smith	Heflin	Simon				
Gramm	Snowe	Hollings	Wellstone				
Grams	Stevens						
Grassley	Thomas						
Gregg	Thompson						
	Thurmond						

VOTING PRESENT(1)
Mack

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

1—Official Business
2—Necessarily Absent
3—Illness
4—Other

SYMBOLS:

AY—Announced Yea
AN—Announced Nay
PY—Paired Yea
PN—Paired Nay

Many parents have been shocked to find their children watching and listening to this explicit programming when they thought they were watching Barney, cartoons, or other children's fair. This amendment would make companies fully block their sexually explicit programming. We urge its adoption.

No arguments were expressed in opposition to the amendment.